



*Embassy of the United States of America
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

WARDEN MESSAGE

December 2, 2008

The Embassy requests that wardens pass the following message in its entirety to members of the American Community:

On or about December 6, 2008 the annual Hajj ritual will begin in the city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia. This year the Saudi Government has implemented a number of new projects to help pilgrims perform their religious duties more safely, including use of a high tech, four level structure at Jamarat, during the ritual of the stoning of the devils.

Approximately three million pilgrims will participate and large crowds and congestion will be unavoidable at the holy sites. Americans are reminded that demonstrations as well as uncomfortable and potentially hazardous crowding conditions may occur with little or no warning. U.S. Citizens participating in the hajj or venturing near the holy sites are strongly encouraged to maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to bolster their personal security. Pilgrims are cautioned against making agreements with dubious Hajj service firms and traveling in unauthorized vehicles to the holy sites. The Saudi Hajj Ministry has licensed 265 companies to provide Hajj services and has established the following contacts to authenticate local Hajj service agents: www.localhajj.info or telephone in Saudi Arabia at 800-244-4480.

For information on emergency services, visit the [U.S. Consulate Jeddah](http://jeddah.usconsulate.gov) website at <https://jeddah.usconsulate.gov>

The U.S. Embassy in Riyadh and Consulates General in Jeddah and Dhahran will be closed from December 4 to December 12, 2008 for the Hajj and Eid holiday and weekends. American citizens who experience an emergency should call 02-667-0080.

American citizens in Saudi Arabia are advised to consult the following Department of State most recent travel information:

1. [Travel Warning for Saudi Arabia, dated](#) July 9, 2008
2. Travel Alert: Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf dated September 23, 2008
3. [Worldwide Caution, dated](#) July 16, 2008

4. Country Specific Information for Saudi Arabia, dated August 25, 2008

The Department of State shares credible threat information through its Consular Information Program documents, available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>. In addition to information on the Internet, travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the United States and Canada or, for callers outside the U.S. and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. Holidays).

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American citizens are reminded to keep their registration up-to-date. See <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> for registration information.

You can also review earlier Warden Messages at <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/service/advisories-for-americans-in-ksa/warden-messages.html>.

General Inquiries: RiyadhACS@state.gov
Registration Inquiries: RegistrationRID@state.gov
ACS Website: <http://riyadh.usembassy.gov/service.html>